



*The park includes both open and wooded areas.*

## Your help is needed

The Upton Historical Commission is leading the community effort to repair the cave and develop the park as a resource for Upton citizens of all ages, where they can hike, enjoy nature and see one of the town's most fascinating and mysterious historic sites.

To make a monetary contribution or volunteer your services, please contact the Historical Commission.

Structures to be added to the park – benches, shelters, trails – can be donated in honor or memory of a loved one.

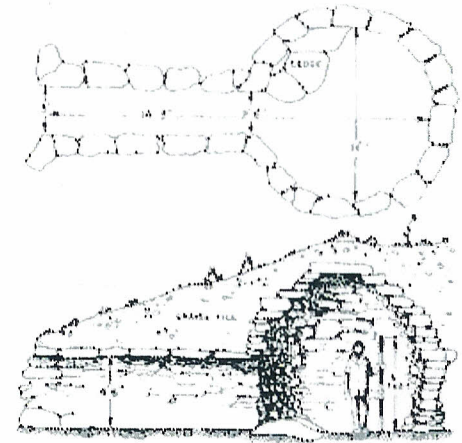
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## Upton Heritage Park

**A mystery becomes a community resource**



**18 Elm Street  
Upton, Massachusetts**



## What is it?

For decades, the stone cave or chamber at 18 Elm Street, near the eastern shore of Mill Pond, has intrigued and puzzled Upton residents and others who have studied its construction and possible origins.

Was it built by pre-Columbus European explorers? By Native Americans as a spiritual site? By early American farmers for agricultural purposes? By a 19<sup>th</sup> century leather tanner? Each theory has its advocates.

The Upton Cave has been described as one of the largest and most perfectly built of more than 300 stone chambers found throughout the Northeast.

A six-foot-high, fourteen-foot-long tunnel leads into a hillside, to a beehive-shaped domed chamber of quarried stone measuring about twelve feet across and eleven feet high.

The cave is topped with several large oval stones believed to weigh several tons each.

As the exploration of its past continues, the future preservation of the cave seems assured. Upton residents voted to preserve the historic stone structure and its setting by acquiring the seven-acre property on Elm Street for a community park, using Community Preservation Act funds.



*Entrance to the Upton cave*

## What's next?

A plan for the park was developed by Liz Morrison, a graduate of the Landscape Institute of Harvard University's Arnold Arboretum, under the auspices of the non-profit Community Outreach Group for Landscape Design.

The plan, approved by the Historic Commission and the Board of Selectmen in 2008, includes additional native plantings, easy walking trails, gathering spots and picnic areas.

The park is being developed as resources become available. The Historical Commission continues to clear invasive, non-native plants and is actively seeking grants and donations to restore the cave and construct trails and other features.

***Currently the park is open to visitors only for special events and tours. Plans call for providing regular public access as soon as possible.***



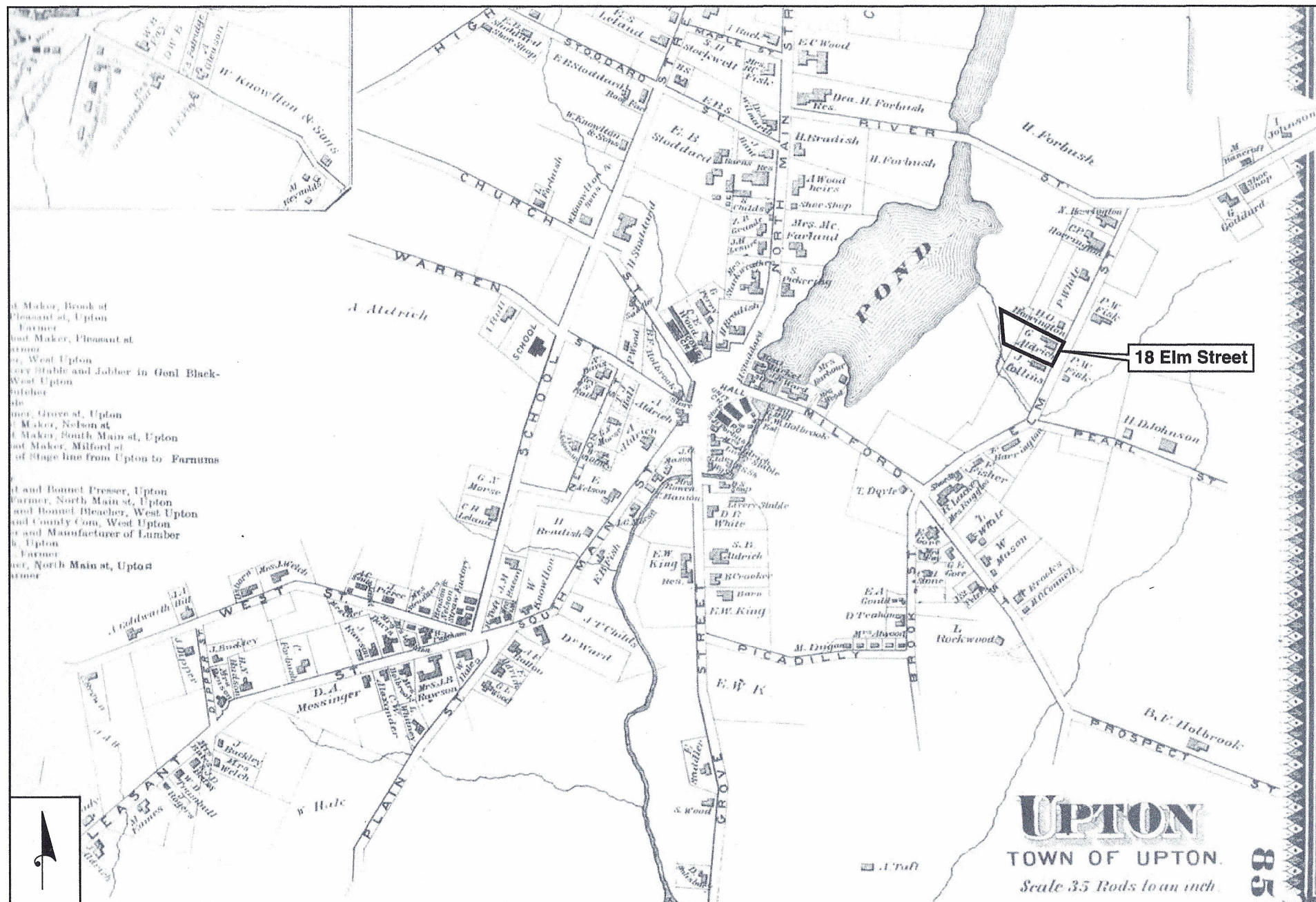


Figure 5. Approximate project location on a detail of the 1870 map of Upton (Beers 1870).